

Preschool Open Doors: Open Enrollment from March 1, 2013 to April 30, 2013

The Preschool Open Doors (POD) program is a child care subsidy program that contributes to children's school readiness by providing a school year of preschool experience in a preschool program. Operated by People Attentive to Children (PATCH) on behalf of the Department of Human Services, the POD program is currently conducting open enrollment for the 2013-2014 school year. The open enrollment period is March 1, 2013 through April 30, 2013. Upon confirmation of eligibility and POD enrollment, the POD subsidies will begin in either August or September 2013 for a maximum of 12 months.

The POD program will accept applications for approximately 325 participants statewide for children who will be four years old by December 31, 2013. POD will also accept applications for children who will be three years old by December 31, 2013 and who have an identified special need but do not qualify for the Department of Education (DOE) Special Education program.

Under the POD program, the children's caretakers are not required to have an activity. However, the family must meet the same monthly gross income eligibility criteria as for the Child Care Connection Hawaii subsidy program, and the family may be required to pay a share of the preschool tuition, depending on the household's size and income.

Using DOE's "Race to the Top" (RTTT) federal funding, there are additional slots for approximately 135 children whose families reside in the Nanakuli/Waianae District on Oahu or the Kau/Keaau/Pahoa District on the island of Hawaii. Qualified POD-RTTT families may choose which preschool to enroll their children in, even if it is outside of these areas. RTTT eligible families receive 100% of the DHS child care subsidy amount up to \$675.00 per month for a DHS licensed preschool or group child care home type of care or up to \$710 per month for an *accredited* preschool. However, depending on the full tuition charged by the selected preschool or group child care facility, the family may still have a co-pay situation with the facility.

Families use the same application, whether applying for POD or POD-RTTT funding. The application packet is available on-line from the PATCH website and may be downloaded in the English or Chinese version from the internet at:
<http://www.patchhawaii.org/families/paying/preschool>.

Families may contact PATCH to request an application and for more information about the POD program at 808-791-2130 on Oahu or toll free at 1-800-746-5620 from the neighbor islands. Refer to the following PATCH website address (<http://www.patchhawaii.org/families/paying/preschool>) for more child care resources.